

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Montpelier, Vermont

TEAM: Commissioner's Office

ITEM: Will the State Board of Education approve the request of the Northfield Elementary School to waive three student attendance days for the 2007-08 school year?

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the State Board of Education not approve the request of the Northfield Elementary School to waive three student attendance days for the 2007-08 school year.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 16 V.S.A. § 1071(c).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In a letter dated March 10, 2008, the board of directors of the Northfield School District requested that the State Board waive three student attendance days due to heating system failure and resulting flood damage at the school during the period December 4–7, 2007. To date, the school has made up one day.

16 V.S.A. § 1071(c) states: “When a public school is closed for cause beyond the control of the school board it may petition the state board for a waiver of the requirements of this section. The petition shall be filed with the state board within 10 days of each occurrence and not later than June 15 of the school year involved; and the state board shall act on the petition at its next meeting. If the petition is approved and a waiver granted, the school district shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of this section. If the state board fails to act at that meeting, the petition shall be deemed to have been approved and the waiver granted.”

Given that there are two and half months remaining in the school year, and given the correlation of the minimum attendance requirements and student outcomes, the Commissioner recommends the denial of this request.

COST IMPLICATIONS: N/A

STAFF AVAILABLE:

Richard Cate, Commissioner; Mark Oettinger, General Counsel